

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 00817 041226Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00 DOE-15 SOE-02 SIL-01
LAB-04 /097 W

-----017365 041418Z /75

R 040900Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4513
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLINH
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0817

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, BU
SUBJECT: STRIKES IN BULGARIA

REF: SOFIA 801 (NOTAL)

1. BULGARIAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT TWO STRIKES OCCURRED
IN BULGARIA WEEK OF APRIL 17, JUST PRIOR TO NATIONAL
PARTY CONFERENCE (REFTEL). WORKERS AT AT LEAST ONE
FACTORY EACH IN PLEVEN (NORTHERN BULGARIA) AND STARA
ZAGORA (IN CENTER OF COUNTRY) REFUSED TO WORK FOR TWO
DAYS. DISPUTES ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN OVER WAGES,
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PAGE 02 SOFIA 00817 041226Z

BUT ALSO TO HAVE HAD A POLITICAL ASPECT. SLOGANS ERE
PAINTED ON WALLS AT LEAST IN PLEVEN STATING, "WE DO
NOT WANT MORE TALK; WE WANT MEAT," IN REFERENCE TO
CONFERENCE AND TO PRESENT UNFAVORABLE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
IN COUNTRY. SOURCZ SAID PARTY OFFICIALS HADHFOUND
STRIKES AND SLOGANS HIGHLY EMBARRASSING.

2. COMMENT: STRIKES ARE RARE IN BULGARIA AND INFORMATION ABOUT THEM IS HARD TO COME BY. TIMING AND TARGETTING OF THESE TWO SHOWED A SOPHISTICATION EMBASSY HAS NOT PRZVIOUSLY REMARKED AMONG BULGARIAN WORKERS IN OUR MEMORY. THESE TWO STRIKES POINTED TO THE PARTY'S WEAKEST POINT -- UNDERPERFORMANCE OF THE ECONOMY -- AND, COMING JUST BEFORE THE PARTY CONFERENCE, PINNED THE TAIL DIRECTLY ON THOSE CONSIDERED RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MALADY.
GARTHOFF

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAGES, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, LABOR STRIKES, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SOFIA00817
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780190-0911
Format: TEL
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780593/aaaadbei.tel
Line Count: 71
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2ade98a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SOFIA 801
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2792032
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STRIKES IN BULGARIA
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2ade98a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014